तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Feeling Separation is Required

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Radharani thinks, "All others are engaged in Krishna's devotion, but I am not." Similarly, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "I have not a pinch of devotion to Krishna.

Then if someone asks him, "Why you are crying?"

"To make a show." Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "I am crying for Krishna just to advertise that I have become a big devotee, but actually I don't have a pinch of devotion for Krishna."

"No, you are such a great devotee. Everyone says."

"No. Everyone may say, but I am not."

"Why you are not?"

"Although I am separated from Krishna, still I am living. That is the proof that I have no love for Krishna."

This is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's statement. "If I had a drop of love for Krishna, how I could live so long without him?" This is love of Krishna, "How can I live in separation from Krishna?" This is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's philosophy. The Goswamis followed this. They never said, "Now I have seen Krishna."

he rādhe vraja-devike ca lalite he nanda-sūno kutaḥ
śrī-govardhana-kalpa-pādapa-tale kālindī-vane kutaḥ
ghoṣantāv iti sarvato vraja-pure khedair mahā-vihvalau
vande rūpa-sanātanau raghu-yugau śrī jīva-gopālakau

next column ☞

They were simply feeling separation. They lived in Vrindavan, but they never said, "Last night I saw Krishna dancing." Rather, they said, "Krishna and the *gopīs*, Radharani, where are you all? Where are you? Are you near Govardhan Hill or on the bank of the river Yamuna? Where are you?" This is called *bhajana*, devotion in separation. We should increase our aspiration in this way more and more. That is required. That *āśā*, that hope, that expectation, will lead us to the topmost platform of devotion. ❁

— *Bhagavad-gītā* lecture in Hawaii. 8 February 1975.

Discipleship Is Eternal

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee 1: You said that we should eternally remain as a disciple. Some devotees say we are eternally the disciple of one particular guru, one *jīva*. Is that correct?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. He is eternally my guru. I am eternally his disciple.

Devotee 1: What does "eternally guru" mean? The person who is appearing as guru may be different in different lifetimes. It may not be the same person.

Gour Govinda Swami: It is the same soul, not the body. *cakṣu-dāna dila yei, janme janme prabhu sei* — Life after life he is my master. [Narottam Das Thakur's *Śrī Guru-vandanā*]. My master is he who has opened my eyes. Which eyes? *Bhakti-cakṣu*, the eyes of devotion. That person is my master life after life — eternally. If you have that eye you can see him. "Oh, here is my guru."

Devotee 1: Some disciples have two spiritual masters. One may have a *dīkṣā-guru*, and a *śikṣā-guru*.

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Gour Govinda Swami: *Dīkṣā-guru* is one, *śikṣā-gurus* are many.

Devotee 1: So the eternal relationship is with the *dīkṣā*-guru only?

Gour Govinda Swami: No. It is with the guru who occupies one's heart.

Devotee 1: Some say that it is only the *dīkṣā*-guru who is eternally my spiritual master life after life.

Gour Govinda Swami: That's not true. It is the guru who has occupied your heart, who has opened your eyes, who has given you *prema-bhakti*. Lochan Das Thakur says in *Caitanya-maṅgala* (*madhya* 11.195):

> *se-i se parama bandhu, se-i mātā-pitā*
> *śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇe yei prema-bhakti-dātā*

He who has given me prema-bhakti at the lotus feet of Krishna, is my supreme friend. He is my father, he is my mother, he is everything.

Devotee 1: Some devotees say that the relationship with the spiritual master is also going on in Vrindavan, in the spiritual world?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. Eternal means it is always going on — in the past, present and future.

Devotee 1: How can the guru-disciple relationship go on there?

Gour Govinda Swami: Why not? Krishna says, *rādhikāra prema-guru, āmi śiṣya naṭa* — Radharani is my guru and I am her disciple. When even Krishna says this, is it not true in your case?

Devotee 1: I was reading in *Prema-vivarta* that in the perfectional stage one is trained under Vishakha.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. *Sakhīs*, *mañjarīs*, the guru is one of them. He is *rādhā-prīya-sakhī* — an intimate companion of Śrimati Radharani. Your relationship is eternal. You'll go there and serve under them. *nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai* — The guru is expert in making arrangements for the conjugal pastimes of Radha Krishna. [*Gurv-aṣṭaka* 6]

Devotee 2: You once said that only a surrendered soul can hear. So what about those who hear, become attracted, and then surrender. What is their state?

Gour Govinda Swami: Attracted means they are surrendered. Otherwise this *kathā* will never enter... If he has no faith he cannot hear. One who is developing faith means he is a disciple. It means surrender.

Devotee 3: When a disciple has taken such a guru, then becomes perfect and goes to the transcendental world, does he work there under that same *mañjarī*?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. Or she may hand the devotee over to someone else to take charge.

Devotee 3: So in that way the disciple is always under the same personality, here or in the transcendental realm?

Gour Govinda Swami: When it is an eternal relationship, yes. You cannot understand this with your material mind. It is inconceivable, *acintya*. How can our material mind conceive it? We just form an idea. But it is not exactly like that. All of these material logics won't help. Just accept it. ❁

— Discussion after class. Bhubaneswar. 1 April 1992.

The Glories and Power of Govardhan Hill

Extracts from* Śrī Garga Saṁhitā, *3.10-11

One day, in order to repay the debt he owed to the sages and ancestors, a *brāhmaṇa* named Vijaya went to Mathura, the holy place that removes all sins. After performing his religious duties, he went to Govardhan Hill and took one of the stones there. Going in a leisurely way from forest to forest, he finally left the circle of Vraja. At that moment, he saw a horrible *rākṣasa* monster approaching, having three heads, three chests, six arms, six legs, three hands, huge lips, and a huge nose. His hands were raised in the air. His seven-hands-long tongue moved to and fro, the hairs of his body were like a tangle of thorns, his eyes were red, and he had long, curved, frightening fangs. Wishing to eat him, the snorting monster approached the *brāhmaṇa*. The *brāhmaṇa* struck the monster with his *govardhana-śilā*. Hit by the stone from Govardhan Hill, the monster gave up his body.

The creature suddenly transformed into a handsome dark person with large lotus-petal eyes, dressed in yellow garments, garlanded with forest flowers, wearing a crown and earrings, holding a flute and stick, glorious as another Cupid, and his features like those of Lord Krishna. With folded hands he then bowed before the *brāhmaṇa* again and again. The liberated soul said, "O best of *brāhmaṇa*s, you earnestly work for the salvation of others. O noble-hearted one, you have rescued me from a monster's life. Good fortune has

come to me simply by the touch of this stone. No one but you could have delivered me."

The *brāhmaṇa* said, "I am astonished by your words. I have no power to deliver you. I don't know how, simply by a stone's touch, this has happened. O saintly one, please explain this."

śrī-siddha uvāca

girirājo hare rūpaṁ śrīmān govardhano giriḥ
tasya darśana-mātreṇa naro yāti kṛtārthatām

The liberated soul said, "Glorious Govardhan Hill, the king of mountains, is the personal form of Lord Krishna. Simply by seeing it one attains the supreme goal of life. (10.15)

gandhamādana-yātrāyāṁ yat phalaṁ labhate araḥ
tasmāt koṭi-guṇaṁ puṇyaṁ girirājasya darśane

"By seeing Govardhan Hill one attains a pious result many millions of times greater than the results of a pilgrimage to Mount Gandhamadan. (10.16)

pañca-varṣa-sahasrāṇi kedāre yat tapaḥ-phalam
tac ca govardhane vipra kṣaṇena labhate naraḥ

"O brāhmaṇa, the same results one attains by performing austerities for five thousand years at Mount Kedara is attained in a single moment at Govardhan Hill. (10.17)

malayādrau svarṇa-bhāra-dānasyāpi ca yat phalam
tasmāt koṭi-guṇaṁ puṇyaṁ girirāje hi māsikam

"By staying for one month at Govardhan Hill one attains a pious result many millions of times greater than the result of giving in charity a basket of gold in the Malaya Hills. (10.18)

parvate maṅgala-prasthe yo dadyād dhema-dakṣiṇām
sa yāti viṣṇu-sārūpyaṁ yuktaḥ pāpa-śatair api

tat padaṁ hi naro yāti girirājasya darśanāt
girirāja-samaṁ puṇyaṁ anyat tīrthaṁ na vidyate

Even though he has committed hundreds of sins, a person who at Mount Mangala gives gold in charity attains a spiritual form like Lord Vishnu's. That same result is attained simply by seeing Govardhan Hill. No other holy place is as sacred as Govardhan Hill. (10.19-20)

ṛṣabhādrau kūṭakādrau kolakādrau tathā naraḥ
suvarṇa-śṛṅga-yuktānāṁ gavāṁ koṭir dadāti yaḥ

mahā-puṇyaṁ labhet so 'pi viprān sampūjya yatnataḥ
tasmāl lakṣa-guṇaṁ puṇyaṁ girau govardhane dvija

O *brāhmaṇa*, simply by visiting Govardhan Hill one attains piety a hundred thousand times greater than the piety he would attain if on the sacred mountains Rishabha, Kutaka, and Kolaka he had worshiped many brāhmaṇas and given in charity ten million cows with golden horns. (10.21-22)

ṛṣyamūkasya sahyasya tathā deva-gireḥ punaḥ
yātrāyāṁ labhate puṇyaṁ samastāya bhuvaḥ phalam
girirājasya yātrāyāṁ tasmāt koṭi-guṇaṁ phalam
girirāja-samaṁ tīrthaṁ na bhūtaṁ na bhaviṣyati

By going on pilgrimage to Govardhan Hill one attains piety ten million times greater than the piety he would attain by going on pilgrimage to Rishyamuka or Devagiri. There never was, nor will there ever be a holy place equal to Govardhan Hill. (10.23-24)

śrī-śaile daśa varṣāṇi kuṇḍe vidyādhare naraḥ
snānaṁ karoti sukṛtī śata-yajña-phalaṁ labhet

govardhane puccha-kuṇḍe dinaikaṁ snāna-kṛn naraḥ
koṭi-yajña-phalaṁ sākṣāt puṇyam eti na saṁśayaḥ

By bathing every day for ten years in Vidyadhara Kunda on Sri Saila one attains the result of a hundred *yajñas*. By once bathing in Puccha Kunda on Govardhan Hill one attains the result of ten million yajñas. Of this there is no doubt. (10.25-26)

citrakūṭe payasvinyāṁ śrī-rāma-navamī-dine
pariyātre tṛtīyāyāṁ vaiśākhasya dvijottamaḥ

kukurādrau ca pūrṇāyāṁ nilādrau dvādaśī-dine
indrakīle ca saptamyāṁ snānaṁ dānaṁ tapaḥ kriyāḥ

tat sarvaṁ koṭi-guṇitaṁ bhavatītthaṁ hi bhārate
govardhane tu tat sarvam anantaṁ jāyate dvija

O best of *brāhmaṇas*, bathing in sacred rivers, giving charity, performing austerities, and performing pious deeds, all these performed during *Rāma-navamī* on Mount Citrakut, during the third day of the month of *Viśākhā* on *pariyātra*, during the full-moon on Mount Kukura, during *dvādaśī* on Mount Nila, or during saptamī at Indrakila bring a great pious result. That pious result is multiplied ten million times by visiting Bharata-varsha. It is multiplied unlimited times by visiting Govardhan Hill. (10.29-31)

govinda-kuṇḍe viśade yaḥ snāti kṛṣṇa-mānasaḥ
prāpnoti kṛṣṇa-sārūpyaṁ maithilendra na saṁśayaḥ

One who, thinking of Lord Krishna, bathes in sacred Govinda-kund, attains a transcendental form like Lord Krishna's. O lord of Mithila, of this there is no doubt. (10.39)

aśvamedha-sahasrāṇi rājasūya-śatāni ca
mānasī-gaṅgayā tulyaṁ na bhavanty atra no girau

Neither a thousand *aśvamedha-yajñas* nor a hundred *rājasūya-yajñas* are equal to visiting Manasi-ganga on Govardhan Hill. (10.40)

O *brāhmaṇa*, you have directly seen and touched Govardhan Hill. You have bathed in its sacred waters. In this world no one is more fortunate than you. If you don't believe my words, consider the story of this great sinner who, because he was touched by a *govardhana-śilā*, attained a transcendental form like Lord Krishna's.

When he heard the liberated soul's words, the *brāhmaṇa* became struck with wonder.

Then he asked another question of the liberated soul, who knew the power and glory of Govardhan Hill. The *brāhmaṇa* said, "Who were you in your previous birth? What sin did you commit? O fortunate one, you have spiritual eyes to see all this directly."

The liberated soul said, "In my previous birth I was a wealthy *vaiśya's* son. From childhood I was a compulsive gambler. I became a great rake, a drunkard addicted to chasing prostitutes. O *brāhmaṇa*, my father, mother, and wife rebuked me again and again. Then one day, I killed my parents with poison and with a sword I killed my wife on a pathway. I took all their money and went with my prostitute beloved to the south, where I became a merciless thief. Later, I threw the prostitute into a blind well and left her there to die. With ropes I killed hundreds of people as I robbed them. O *brāhmaṇa*, I was so greedy after money that as a highwayman I murdered hundreds of *brāhmaṇa*s and thousands of *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, and *śūdras*.

"One day, as I was hunting deer in the forest, I stepped on a snake. The snake bit me and I died. Fearsome Yamadutas beat me with terrible clubs, tied me up, and dragged me, a great sinner, to hell. I fell into the terrible hell named Kumbhipak and I stayed there for a *manvantara*. For a *kalpa* I was forced to embrace the red-hot iron statue of a woman. I suffered greatly. By the desire of Yamaraj I was thrown into eight million four-hundred thousand different hells. Then my karma took me to Bharata-varsha. For ten births I was a pig, and for a hundred births I was a tiger. For a hundred births I was a camel. For another hundred births I was a buffalo. For a thousand births I was a snake. Wicked men killed me again and again. O *brāhmaṇa*, after ten thousand years of these births I was born in a desert as a grotesque and wicked monster.

"One day I assumed the form of a *śūdra* and I went to Vraja. I came near to Vrindavan and the sacred Yamuna. With sticks in their hands, some of Lord Krishna's handsome friends beat me severely and I fled from the land of Vraja. Hungry for many days, I came here to eat you. Then you hit me with a stone from Govardhan Hill. Then, by Lord Krishna's kindness, I became very fortunate."

As the liberated soul was speaking these words, a chariot, splendid as a thousand suns and drawn by ten thousand horses, came from Goloka. The chariot rumbled with a thousand wheels. It was decorated with a hundred thousand associates of the Lord. It had a great network of bells and tinkling ornaments. It was extremely beautiful. The *brāhmaṇa* and the liberated soul bowed down before the chariot. Climbing the chariot, and at that moment losing all interest in his heart to stay in the material world, the liberated soul went to Sri Krishna's beautiful abode, graceful with many pastime gardens, the highest of all spiritual realms.

Then the *brāhmaṇa* returned to Govardhan Hill, the deity worshiped by the kings of mountains. Circumambulating the hill, bowing down before it, and now aware of its great power and glory, the *brāhmaṇa* went to his home.

yaḥ śṛṇoti girirāja-yasaśyaṁ
gopa-rāja-nava-keli-rahasyam
deva-rāja iva so 'tra sameti
nanda-rāja iva śāntim amutra

One who hears the glories of Govardhan Hill, glories that are filled with the secrets of Lord Krishna's ever-new transcendental pastimes, will become as fortunate as King Indra in this life and as fortunate as King Nanda in the next. (11.26)

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